

Art Unit 2653
Serial No. 10/633,145

PATENT
Attorney Docket No.: K35A1301

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the application, as amended. Claims 1-8 have been amended and a new claim 9 has been added.

The amendments to the specification add no new matter, but rather merely replace the Summary of the Invention and the Abstract with descriptive paragraphs that better correspond to the invention as claimed after the amendments to the claims herein have been made. For example, Fig. 3 and Fig. 7 each depict exemplary embodiments in which the protrusions are in contact with the trace suspension flex, and so support language to that effect in the amended Summary and Abstract paragraphs.

The claims have been amended in a manner that adds no new matter. For example, language added to independent claims 1 and 5 is supported by at least Fig. 3 or Fig. 7, each of which depicts an exemplary embodiment in which the protrusions are in contact with the trace suspension flex. Furthermore, language added to dependent claims 2 and 6 is supported by at least Fig. 2, Fig. 3, Fig. 6, or Fig. 7, each of which depicts an exemplary embodiment in which each stamped protrusion extends from the actuator arm side surface in a direction that is generally parallel to the top surface of the actuator arm. Moreover, language added to dependent claims 3 and 7 is supported by at least paragraph [00021] on page 6 of the originally filed specification, where describing the exemplary embodiment of Fig. 3 the specification states that "[t]race suspension flex 96 may be suitably attached to protrusions 80, 82, 84 via adhesive." Finally, language added to dependent claims 4 and 9 is supported by at least Fig. 2, Fig. 3, Fig. 6, or Fig. 7, each of which depicts an exemplary embodiment in which at least one of the stamped protrusions has a thickness that is substantially less than that of the stamped actuator arm.

Applicant respectfully submits that the following remarks specifically point out how the language of the claims patentably distinguishes them from the prior art of record including US Patent 5,656,877 to Loubier ("Loubier") in view of US Patent 6,728,073 to Budde et al ("Budde").

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The prior art of record, including Loubier in view of Budde, does not teach or suggest certain claimed features in each of claims 1-9. For example, neither Loubier nor Budde discloses actuator arm protrusions in contact with a trace suspension flex.

Loubier, including the passages cited by the examiner and the examiner's drawing, nowhere discloses a trace suspension flex nor any actuator arm protrusions in contact with a trace suspension flex. Rather Loubier only discloses wires and machined wire guides in the actuator arm. No trace suspension flex contacts any of the protrusions identified by the examiner in the examiner's drawing. Therefore Loubier does not teach or disclose any actuator arm protrusions in contact with a trace suspension flex.

The protrusions in Budde are not actuator arm protrusions. Rather the protrusions in Budde are part of a head gimbal assembly (HGA) 40, and they protrude from the load beam 42 of the HGA 40 – specifically from the part of the load beam 42 identified as base plate 56. The pending claims separately recite the head gimbal assembly (HGA) and the actuator arm as different structures; one is not a part of the other. The presently pending claims allow the head gimbal assembly to include a base plate, but that base plate could not be considered as part of the separately recited actuator arm. Therefore Budde also does not teach or disclose any actuator arm protrusions in contact with a trace suspension flex.

Since neither Loubier nor Budde teaches or discloses any actuator arm protrusions in contact with a trace suspension flex, their combination cannot properly be understood to teach or disclose that absent claim limitation. Accordingly, no proper prima facie case of obviousness can be based on the combination of Loubier and Budde.

Certain features introduced by the dependent claims are also absent in one or more of the prior art references relied upon by the examiner. For example, Loubier does not disclose that a trace suspension flex is attached to at least one of the stamped protrusions, as required by dependent claims 3 and 7. Budde does not teach that at least one of the stamped protrusions has a thickness that is substantially less than that of the stamped actuator arm, as required by dependent claims 4 and 9.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims 1-9 are now in condition for allowance and requests reconsideration of the rejections. Allowance of claims 1-9 at an early date is respectfully solicited.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayments to Deposit Account No. 23-1209.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 3, 2005

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